

Today's News - Friday, December 19, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE: 2014 has been an eventful/inspiring/depressing/surprising year of news - and we've enjoyed sharing it all with you. Today's news is a bit longer than usual because we're starting our holiday break a bit early. We'll be back January 5, 2015. We wish everyone Happy Ho-Ho-Holidays and a New Year filled with grand adventures and great expectations fulfilled!

- Weinstein returns (yay!) with a review of Young's "Saint John's Abbey Church," a "towering history of Breuer's Bauhaus-influenced design" that "dazzles as an illuminating story of a critical episode in church architectural history, replete with lessons for architects in the present."
- Filler's take-down of Chartres Cathedral's "restoration" is rebutted by Caviness and Jeffrey Hamburger re: his "well-meaning but also misinformed" post - and Filler responds.
- Bernstein cheers Kaufman's plan to turn Rudolph's Orange County Government Center into artist studios "with a group of tenants who will revel in its eccentricities. After half a century, function may finally follow form."
- King, meanwhile, is a bit concerned about the fate of Ciampi's 1970 Berkeley Art Museum: "the departure of the museum for which it was built, and the structure's vague future, shows the peril of designing for the drama of the moment."
- Horton reports on a fashion designer's quest to save some of Tokyo's 20th-century architectural landmarks "under threat by the development ramp-up to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics."
- Gunts and Russiello talks to Graves re: the news that his Portland Building is no longer under threat of demolition (and the mayor's office confirms).
- Bentley pens a most thoughtful op-ed re: Chicago's Lucas Museum plans: "the speed with which much of the public wrote off this opportunity deserves some challenge. Let's work to bring this design down to earth, instead of hitting hyperdrive to discredit it."
- Chicago's West Loop (formerly known as Skid Row) is going through "what researchers call gentrification on steroids."
- Keegan reviews a few of 2014's "great moments in Chicago architecture": "The Spire is (really) dead...But we are building again!"
- Jacobs ponders why Calatrava seems to be "the world's most hated architect": "It's rare to hear important figures in architecture publicly attack a colleague with such undisguised venom" - and she also gets some serious face time with the man to hear his side of the story - a fascinating read!
- Critics of Calatrava's uber-costly projects should take a look at this great "run-down of some of the world's most eye-wateringly over-budget projects" (nary a Calatrava among them!).
- More on China's crackdown on "weird architecture" that "has reignited debate over the financial and aesthetic excesses of urban design," and leaving many wondering "if it would dampen creativity more than it would curb freakish designs."
- Raptopoulos wraps up her insightful Stormproofing the City series with eight takeaways: "keep an eye on the moving parts: although Sandy is long gone, there is a lot of work still ahead."
- Heatherwick's Garden Bridge over the Thames gets final approval - with a slight hitch: there's no deal yet on who will pay to run it; the mayor "said he has no intention of underwriting the expected £3.5m annual bill."
- Kats is totally taken by the Cooper Hewitt's makeover: "Four floors of galleries provide so much varied visual stimulation that a curious child, a seasoned designer, or a blockhead can all come away captivated."
- An impressive list of 100 winners in BWA's Built by Women New York City/BxW NYC competition.
- Help Wanted: PennPraxis Managing Director, University of Pennsylvania School of Design, Philadelphia.
- Weekend diversions:
 - In Canberra, Frost finds "James Turrell: A Retrospective" invokes "a feeling of awe that's rare in contemporary art" that "feels vaguely religious but more than that, an evocation of the infinite that ultimately defeats language itself: the true sublime."
 - Farago finds "One Way: Peter Marino" to be "a spectacle of decadence - and it's - well, it's perfect for Miami."
 - Heathcote and Wainwright find more just than fun (though there's much of that!) at the V&A's "Small Stories: At Home in a Doll's House."
 - The Dallas Center for Architecture's "Building Toys and Toy Buildings: Architecture Through a Child's Eyes" is "way cool. It's a small exhibit - but don't let its size fool you."
 - Green rounds up his pick of Best Books of 2014 that include tomes by Lerner, Corner, Brown, and Benfield.
 - "Archiculture" documentary is now online, including some great interviews with some of the profession's greats.
 - One we couldn't resist: Babina's latest illustrations of some of history's most famous film stars doing daily chores and just chillin' out in some great Modernist masterpieces: "From Marilyn and Mies to Caine and Kahn..." (such fun!).

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Book Review: "Saint John's Abbey Church: Marcel Breuer and the Creation of a Modern Sacred Space," by Victoria M. Young: A history of the making of a contemporary sacred architectural masterpiece transcends its subject and becomes a broadly applicable study of peerless client-architect communication. By Norman Weinstein [images]- ArchNewsNow

The New Chartres Cathedral: An Exchange: Madeline H. Caviness and Jeffrey Hamburger, reply by Martin Filler: "We write in response to Filler's well-meaning but also misinformed blog posting"... "However much historical accuracy may be asserted, broader cultural associations, and especially aesthetic common sense, must play a major part in such decisions." -- American Friends of Chartres Cathedral- New York Review of Books

Unlocking Rudolph's DNA: Gene Kaufman's plan to turn Paul Rudolph's Orange County Government Center into artist studios is the best thing to happen to the building since county officials began threatening to tear it down in 2004...Orange Arts could tap into the burgeoning Hudson Valley "arts scene...with a group of tenants who will revel in its eccentricities. And that's just what it needs. After half a century, function may finally follow form. By Fred A. Bernstein -- Gwathmey Siegel Kaufman & Associates Architects; DesignLab; Clark Patterson Lee- Architectural Record

Time has left Berkeley Art Museum's bold design behind: ...survives as the Bay Area's most emphatic example of Brutalism...that fell out of favor almost as soon as it arrived on the scene...the departure of the museum for which it was built, and the structure's vague future, shows the peril of designing for the drama of the moment. By John King - - Mario Ciampi (1970); Diller Scofidio + Renfro; EHDD- San Francisco Chronicle

Tokyo's Endangered Modernist Buildings Find an Unlikely Advocate: The fashion designer Tomas Maier has launched a campaign to save the best of the Japanese capital's 20th-century architecture...a handful of these endangered architectural landmarks...under threat by the development ramp-up to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. By Guy Horton -- Kenzo Tange; Yoshiro Taniguchi- Metropolis Magazine

Portland Building, once eyed for demolition, will be saved, Michael Graves says: "They said they are saving the building and not only that but we want you to sit on a committee for the redesign"...communications director for Portland mayor confirmed that [it] is not under threat of demolition... By Edward Gunts and James Russiello- The Architect's Newspaper

Editorial> New Hope or a Phantom Menace? Without more detail, is Chicago's Lucas Museum dead on arrival? ...the

speed with which much of the public wrote off this opportunity deserves some challenge...Let's work to bring this design down to earth, instead of hitting hyperdrive to discredit it. By Chris Bentley -- MAD Architects; Studio Gang Architects; VOA- The Architect's Newspaper

There Goes the Neighborhood: 'Uber-gentrification' a force in Chicago's West Loop: First it was Oprah, now Google. Former industrial zone is a mix of meatpackers, celebrity chefs and high-end retailers...what researchers call gentrification on steroids. - WBEZ Chicago Public Radio

Great moments in Chicago architecture 2014: The Spire is (really) dead...But we are building again! Jeanne Gang is bigger than ever... By Edward Keegan -- Santiago Calatrava; BKL Architects; Juan Moreno/JGMA; Ma Yansong/MAD Architects; Pelli Clarke Pelli; Bertrand Goldberg; Ralph Johnson/Perkins & Will; Valerio Dewalt Train [images] - Crain's Chicago Business

Santiago Calatrava: The World's Most Hated Architect? Critics blast him for wildly overbudget projects, including the World Trade Center's new transit hub. Is he just misunderstood? It's rare to hear important figures in architecture publicly attack a colleague with such undisguised venom. But, where Calatrava is concerned, it is open season....The real problem may have less to do with budgets and more to do with who and what Calatrava is. By Karrie Jacobs -- Michael Graves; Peter Eisenman [images] - Fast Company

Monumental Budget Busters: Damnably described as 'hell on wheels', 'malice in blunderland', and 'a field of dreams'; welcome to a run-down of some of the world's most eye-wateringly over-budget projects. - Podio

Under Xi Jinping, China's Wave of 'Weird Architecture' May Have Peaked: ...has reignited debate over the financial and aesthetic excesses of urban design...Many wondered if it would dampen creativity more than it would curb freakish designs...urban planners with state institutions...have been exploring ways to translate his prescription into concrete measures. -- Ma Yansong/MAD Architects; Rem Koolhaas/Ole Scheeren/OMA; Wang Shu; Zaha Hadid [images] - New York Times

Stormproofing the City: How prepared is New York City for future superstorms? The question is far from settled: ...eight takeaways -- including that without Sandy, the city would be much less safe today...keep an eye on the moving parts: although Sandy is long gone, there is a lot of work still ahead. By Lilah Raptopoulos - Guardian (UK)

Thames garden bridge plan gets green light from London mayor: Approval means construction of crossing could begin next year, but no deal reached over bridge's £3.5m annual running costs...Boris Johnson has said he has no intention of underwriting the expected £3.5m annual bill. -- Thomas Heatherwick - Guardian (UK)

The Cooper Hewitt Steps Up to its Role as Our Great Design Museum: ...galleries provide so much varied visual stimulation that a curious child, a seasoned designer, or a blockhead can all come away captivated...displays treat basics necessities and opulent luxuries as equally ripe for inquiry, a reminder that, in the hands of an imaginative user, even the most banal objects inspire transformative experiences. By Anna Kats - Artinfo

Built by Women New York City (BxW NYC): Winners Impacting Life in New York City: ...a rich pool from which to select 100 sites. [link to list] - Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation (BWAFF)

Help Wanted: PennPraxis Managing Director: ...will work closely with the Executive Director to help link PennDesign faculty and students to relevant projects, market Praxis to potential clients and funders, and establish meaningful partnerships with other organizations. - University of Pennsylvania School of Design

"James Turrell: A Retrospective" -- light and colour reach for the sublime: ...to create tricks on the mind and eye, invoking a feeling of awe that's rare in contemporary art...an experience without need of interpretation or foreknowledge of the artist's intentions or history. It simply is...The result feels vaguely religious but more than that, an evocation of the infinite that ultimately defeats language itself: the true sublime. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. By Andrew Frost - Guardian (UK)

"One Way: Peter Marino" - a spectacle of decadence:a showcase of both the work and the collection of the New York architect...and it's - well, it's perfect for Miami, I can say that...If a private collector wants to hang such important works in such decadent circumstances, that's no concern of mine. Whether a nonprofit museum should be the forum for this, though, is a thornier matter. Bass Museum of Art, Miami. By Jason Fargo [images] - Guardian (UK)

Life's little pleasures: a mini history of the doll's house: The 16th-century creation has served as a children's toy, a housekeeping aid and a plaything of the wealthy: The doll's house has lasted because it allows our adult and our infant selves to imagine a level of perfection, completeness and control so conspicuously lacking from the chaos of our actual lives. "Small Stories: At Home in a Doll's House" at the V&A's Museum of Childhood. By Edwin Heathcote [images] - Financial Times (UK)

All mini cons: a peek inside the history of the doll's house: ...the story of Britain can be told through 300 years of doll's houses: "Small Stories" at the V&A Museum of Childhood in London...tells a powerful story of taste, class and social mores...these diminutive dwellings let you have a good nose at other people's lives -- or, more accurately, the lives they always wanted to lead. By Oliver Wainwright [images] - Guardian (UK)

Way-cool exhibit of vintage and modern toys returns to Dallas: "Building Toys and Toy Buildings: Architecture Through a Child's Eyes" returns for its third year at the Dallas Center for Architecture. It's a small exhibit...but don't let its size fool you.... - Dallas Morning News

Best Books of 2014: "Urban Acupuncture: Celebrating Pinpricks of Change That Enrich City Life" by Jaime Lerner; "The Landscape Imagination: Collected Essays of James Corner, 1990-2010"; "Next Generation Infrastructure: Principles for Post-Industrial Public Works" by Hillary Brown; "People Habitat: 25 Ways to Think About Greener, Healthier Cities" by F. Kaid Benfield; etc. By Jared Green - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

"Archiculture" now online: a thoughtful, yet critical look at the architectural studio...offers a unique glimpse into the world of studio-based, design education through the eyes of a group of students finishing their final design projects. Interviews with leading professionals, historians and educators.... - Archiculture

ARCHILIFE: Hollywood Stars Chill Out in Modernist Masterpieces: Federico Babina's images show history's most famous film stars living out their daily routines in some of our favorite homes...From Marilyn and Mies to Caine and Kahn, the stars get a home to match their temperament, in which to relax, watch TV, meditate -- and yes, to clean and tidy too. [images] - ArchDaily

-- An Interview with Christian Kerez: The Surreal Saga of Warsaw's Parade Square [Museum of Modern Art]:
Vanguard architects who step onto the global stage...rarely air their trials and tribulations. Zurich-based Kerez is an
outstanding exception to this rule.
-- Commune by the Great Wall, Beijing, China: ...a collection of buildings designed by a dozen architects... By Kevin
Holden Platt -- Yung Ho Chang; Shigeru Ban; Kengo Kuma; Antonio Ochoa; Gary Chang; Seung H Sang

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